

# Prior Heath Infant School

December 2024

Dear Parents,

## **New Beginnings**

The Autumn term is always exciting as a new cohort of pupils arrive in Year R and others move up through the school. This arrival of new children always brings new opportunities and challenges for us at Prior Heath.

Likewise, this year with the Governing Body, I was appointed as the new Chair in September after Martyn Keates stepped down in the summer after 11 brilliant years of service. He has been congratulated for bringing Mrs Chivers to the Headteacher role and helping the school through COVID and he leaves the school in a very strong position.

Martyn's exit also left us with just 7 Governors, not an uncommon challenge these days. However, with some creative marketing and information sharing at the new parents' introduction meeting, we have gained 5 new Governors with a wide variety of backgrounds and I am excited that this largely new team can help the school continue to thrive. Our role is to challenge and support the school in equal measure and one of the primary tools that we use for this are the monitoring visits into school during which we have opportunities to meet with the children and staff.

If you see any of us around, please feel free to say hello and ask any questions that you may have.

## **Operational Business**

The Governors continue to support Mrs Chivers and her staff with the biggest challenges facing all schools. We think Mrs Chivers and the teaching team do an amazing job and new, highly skilled staff continue to be attracted to the school when vacancies arise. Meanwhile the school finances are always a challenge. Although the new Government has made some positive promises around school funding, half way through the financial year we still do not know the full impact that this will have on the school. We are, however, confident that we will continue to manage the finances effectively and allow the maximum possible resources for the education of your children

## **Monitoring Visits**

There were two successful monitoring visits conducted by Governors this term which were enjoyed by both Governors and children alike. The children have such confidence at Prior Heath and delight in telling us what they love about the school! These visits inform us, enable us to make suggestions and offer challenge to the staff.

## **Other Business**

The bungalow that sits within our staff car park now sits empty after our tenant decided not to renew their rental agreement. Unfortunately, we seem to be at an impasse with the

Surrey legal department over letting it out. We are trying to be creative with solutions to this challenge as it is a vital source of extra income for the school.

Our website provider's agreement is ending in April next year. We see this as a great opportunity to get a new company involved and give the website a revamp. The useful content will remain and the site will continue to be easy to navigate but hopefully will look aesthetically more modern.

### **School**

I and many other Governors attended the Christmas production and PTA Christmas fair – both were a huge success. My thanks go to all those involved, parents and staff alike.

### **Finally**

On behalf of the Governors, I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a successful New Year.

Paul Heagren  
Chair of Governors